

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (previously presented): A method of pixel filtering for CMOS imagers, comprising:

scanning each of a plurality of pixels within a block;

designating a pixel as a process pixel, the process pixel having adjacent pixels, the process pixel having a process pixel value, each of the adjacent pixels having an adjacent pixel value;

comparing the process pixel value to at least one adjacent pixel value; and

detecting a lowest pixel value among the adjacent pixels.

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein comparing compares the process pixel value to a lowest pixel value.

Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 3 further comprising resetting the process pixel to a new pixel value.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 4 wherein the new pixel value is the average pixel value of the adjacent pixel values.

Claim 6 (original): The method of claim 1 further comprising detecting a highest pixel value among the adjacent pixels.

Claim 7 (original): The method of claim 6 wherein comparing compares the process pixel value to a highest pixel value.

Claim 8 (original): The method of claim 7 further comprising resetting the process pixel value when the process pixel value is a predetermined value lower than the lowest pixel value.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The method of claim 3 further comprising resetting the process pixel value when the process pixel value is a predetermined value greater than a highest pixel value.

Claim 10 (original): The method of claim 1 further comprising exposing an array to a light source so as to cast an image on the array, the array having at least one block.

Claim 11 (original): The method of claim 10 wherein the array is generally grid-shaped.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the block is generally grid-shaped.

Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 12 wherein the block has nine pixels.

Claims 14-16 (cancelled)

Claim 17 (previously presented): A method of on-chip pixel filtering for CMOS imagers, comprising:

scanning each of a plurality of pixels within a block for a pixel value;

loading a pixel value into a register;

using filter logic to designate a pixel as a process pixel, the process pixel having adjacent pixels, the process pixel having a process pixel value, each of the adjacent pixels having an adjacent pixel value; and

using filter logic to compare the process pixel value to at least one adjacent pixel value,

wherein the filter logic compares the process pixel value to a lowest pixel value, further comprising:

detecting the lowest pixel value among the adjacent pixels; and

resetting the process pixel value to a new process pixel value when the process pixel value is a predetermined value lower than the lowest pixel value.

Claim 18 (original): The method of claim 17, wherein the filter logic compares the process pixel value to a highest pixel value, further comprising:

detecting the highest pixel value among the adjacent pixels; and

resetting the process pixel value to a new process pixel value when the process pixel value is a predetermined value higher than the highest pixel value.

Claim 19 (cancelled)

Claim 20 (currently amended): The method of claim ~~49~~ 17 wherein the new process pixel value is the average pixel value of the adjacent pixel values.